
Title: Memory

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In the valley of Nis the
accursed waning moon
shines thinly, tearing a
path for its light with
feeble horns through the
lethal foliage of a great
upas-tree. And within the
depths of the valley,
where the light reaches
not, move forms not
meant to be beheld. Rank
is the herbage on each
slope, where evil vines
and creeping plants crawl
amidst the stones of
ruined palaces, twining
tightly about broken
columns and strange
monoliths, and heaving up
marble pavements laid by
forgotten hands. And in
trees that grow gigantic
in crumbling courtyards
leap little apes, while in
and out of deep
treasure-vaults writhe
poison serpents and scaly
things without a name.

Vast are the stones
which sleep beneath
coverlets of dank moss,
and mighty were the walls
from which they fell. For
all time did their builders
erect them, and in sooth
they serve nobly, for
beneath them the grey
toad makes his habitation.

At the very bottom of
the valley lies the river
Than, whose waters are
slimy and filled with
weeds. From hidden
springs it rises, and to
subterranean grottoes it
flows, so that the
Daemon of the Valley
knows not why its waters

are red, nor whither they
are bound.

The Genie that haunts
the moonbeams spake to
the Daemon of the Valley,
saying, "I am old, and
forget much. Tell me the
deeds and aspect and
name of them who built
these things of Stone."

And the Daemon replied,
"I am Memory, and am
wise in lore of the past,
but I too am old. These
beings were like the
waters of the river Than,
not to be understood.
Their deeds I recall not,
for they were but of the
moment. their aspect I
recall dimly, it was like
to that of the little
apes in the trees. Their
name I recall clearly, for
it rhymed with that of
the river. These beings of
yesterday were called
Man."

So the Genie flew
back to the thin horned
moon, and the Daemon
looked intently at a little
ape in a tree that grew
in a crumbling courtyard.